

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DEAE-00 HUD-01 AID-05 HEW-04 TRSE-00

SNM-02 OMB-01 OES-06 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 /037 W

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R 161720Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6365

INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

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DEPT PASS DEA; HUD; AID; DHEW; CUSTOMS

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR, SOCI, SWEL, TBIO, AR

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S CALL ON SOCIAL WELFARE MINISTER

1. THE AMBASSADOR MADE HIS INITIAL COURTESY CALL JULY 15 ON NEW SOCIAL WELFARE MINISTER, REAR ADMIRAL JULIO JUAN BARDI. ECON COUNSELOR (ACTING DCM) AND S&T COUNSELOR ACCOMPANIED THE AMBASSADOR.

2. NARCOTICS. INITIAL AND LARGEST PART OF CONVERSATION DEALT WITH NARCOTICS MATTERS. ADM. BARDI SHOWED AMBASSADOR SOME FIGURES INDICATING ENORMOUS INCREASE IN DRUG USAGE IN ARGENTINA BETWEEN 1969 AND 1975. COCAINE (BOLIVIAN-ORIGIN PRIMARILY) AND MARIJUANA WERE THE PRINCIPAL DRUGS BEING USED. MINISTER WAS CONVINCED PROBLEM WAS SERIOUS AND REQUIRED DRASTIC ACTION, WHICH IS CONTEMPLATED, PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO MARIJUANA PRODUCTION IN THE COUNTRY. ADM. BARDI STATED HIS INTENT TO USE CONATON (WHICH HE PRESIDES) AS ACTIVE COORDINATING ORGANIZATION TO COMBAT DRUG-ABUSE IN ARGENTINA. HE ALSO INDICATED WILLINGNESS USE IT TO SET PRIORITIES FOR EQUIPMENT REQUESTS AND TO COORDINATE TRAINING MATTERS. (HE MENTIONED SPECIFICALLY NEED TO INCLUDE "PREFECTURA"-THE EQUIVALENT OF OUR COAST GUARD-IN TRAINING PROGRAMS.) HE AND CONATON WOULD WELCOME

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VISIT OF U.S. CUSTOMS EXPERTS TO HELP PLAN FUTURE TRAINING

PROGRAMS. (SEE BUENOS AIRES 4408) ADM. BARDI IS WILLING TO HOLD MEETINGS OF U.S.-ARGENTINA BINATIONAL COMMISSION.

3. RATIFICATION OF INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS COVENTIONS WAS DISCUSSED AT JULY 6 CONATON MEETING AND IS "ON THE AGENDA". PROBLEM HAS BEEN HANDED TO FOREIGN MINISTRY. RATIFICATION WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED BY FORMAL DECISION OF THE PRESIDENT.

4. HOUSING. ADM. BARDI DESCRIBED THE HOUSING CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM HE HAD INHERITED. ARGENTINA, HE SAID, HAS A DEFICIT OF 2,400,000 DWELLING UNITS. IT HAS 215,000 UNITS UNDER CONSTRUCTION, BUT WITHOUT ADEQUATE FINANCING. HE SOUGHT U.S. ASSISTANCE IN FINANCING IF POSSIBLE. THE AMBASSADOR MADE NO COMMITMENTS, BUT AGREED TO REVIEW THE STATUS OF THE AID HOUSING LOAN. IT WAS AGREED THAT THE AMBASSADOR WOULD VISIT A HOUSING CONSTRUCTION PROJECT. THE MINISTER EXPRESSED INTEREST IN INCREASED AND CONTINUING CONTACTS ON HOUSING MATTERS; PARTICULARLY RE PREFABRICATED DWELLINGS.

5. HEALTH. ADM. BARDI HAD NOT BEEN BRIEFED ON THE PENDING HEALTH SCIENCES BILATERAL, BUT EXPRESSED INTEREST IN COOPERATION ON HEALTH MATTERS. HE IS PUTTING CONSIDERABLE EMPHASIS ON COMBATTING IMPORTANT DESEASES. WE PLAN FURTHER CONSULTATIONS WITH DR. LEON RE THE PENDING AGREEMENT.
HILL

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